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United States of America

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

ISIDRO ZURIEL CRUZ-VIZCARRA,

Defendant.

CASE NO. 1:22-CR-00179-JLT-SKO

STIPULATION REGARDING EXCLUDABLE
TIME PERIODS UNDER SPEEDY TRIAL ACT;
ORDER

DATE: November 2, 2022

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

COURT: Hon. Sheila K. Oberto

This case is set for a status conference on November 2, 2022. This Court has issued a series of General Orders to address public health concerns related to COVID-19, to suspend jury trials in the Eastern District of California, including recently, General Order 628, and many related previous and subsequent general orders pertaining to the pandemic and procedures put in place to limit community spread.

Although the General Orders address the district-wide health concern, the Supreme Court has emphasized that the Speedy Trial Act's end-of-justice provision "counteract[s] substantive openendedness with procedural strictness," "demand[ing] on-the-record findings" in a particular case. *Zedner v. United States*, 547 U.S. 489, 509 (2006). "[W]ithout on-the-record findings, there can be no exclusion under" § 3161(h)(7)(A). *Id.* at 507. Moreover, any such failure cannot be harmless. *Id.* at 509; *see also United States v. Ramirez-Cortez*, 213 F.3d 1149, 1153 (9th Cir. 2000) (explaining that a judge ordering an ends-of-justice continuance must set forth explicit findings on the record "either orally

1 or in writing”).

2 Based on the plain text of the Speedy Trial Act—which *Zedner* emphasizes as both mandatory
3 and inexcusable—General Orders 611, 612, and 617 require specific supplementation. Ends-of-justice
4 continuances are excludable only if “the judge granted such continuance on the basis of his findings that
5 the ends of justice served by taking such action outweigh the best interest of the public and the
6 defendant in a speedy trial.” 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A). Moreover, no such period is excludable unless
7 “the court sets forth, in the record of the case, either orally or in writing, its reason or finding that the
8 ends of justice served by the granting of such continuance outweigh the best interests of the public and
9 the defendant in a speedy trial.” *Id.*

10 The General Orders exclude delay in the “ends of justice.” 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7) (Local Code
11 T4). Although the Speedy Trial Act does not directly address continuances stemming from pandemics,
12 natural disasters, or other emergencies, this Court has discretion to order a continuance in such
13 circumstances. For example, the Ninth Circuit affirmed a two-week ends-of-justice continuance
14 following Mt. St. Helens’ eruption. *Furlow v. United States*, 644 F.2d 764 (9th Cir. 1981). The court
15 recognized that the eruption made it impossible for the trial to proceed. *Id.* at 767-68; *see also United*
16 *States v. Correa*, 182 F. Supp. 326, 329 (S.D.N.Y. 2001) (citing *Furlow* to exclude time following the
17 September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and the resultant public emergency). The coronavirus is posing a
18 similar, albeit more enduring, barrier to the prompt proceedings mandated by the statutory rules.

19 In light of the societal context created by the foregoing, this Court should consider the following
20 case-specific facts in finding excludable delay appropriate in this particular case under the ends-of-
21 justice exception, § 3161(h)(7) (Local Code T4).¹ If continued, this Court should designate a new date
22 for the status conference. *United States v. Lewis*, 611 F.3d 1172, 1176 (9th Cir. 2010) (noting any
23 pretrial continuance must be “specifically limited in time”).

24 STIPULATION

25 Plaintiff United States of America, by and through its counsel of record, and defendant, by and
26 through defendant’s counsel of record, hereby stipulate as follows:

27 _____
28 ¹ The parties note that General Order 612 acknowledges that a district judge may make
“additional findings to support the exclusion” at the judge’s discretion. General Order 612, ¶ 5 (E.D.
Cal. March 18, 2020).

1 1. By previous order, this matter was set for status on November 2, 2022.

2 2. By this stipulation, defendants now move to continue the status conference until February
3 1, 2023, at 1:00 P.M. and to exclude time between November 2, 2022, and February 1, 2023, inclusive,
4 under Local Code T4.

5 3. The parties agree and stipulate, and request that the Court find the following:

6 a) The discovery associated with this case is voluminous and includes tens of
7 thousands of pages, including investigative reports, photographs and videos, as well as hundreds
8 of hours of recorded telephone conversations pursuant to wiretap orders, many cellular phone
9 extractions, and large amounts of cellular telephone precise location data and vehicle tracker
10 data. All this discovery has been either produced directly to counsel and/or made available for
11 inspection and copying.

12 b) Counsel for defendants desire additional time to consult with their clients, conduct
13 investigation, review the voluminous discovery, prepare for a possible trial, and explore a
14 potential resolution of the case.

15 c) Counsel for defendants believe that failure to grant the above-requested
16 continuance would deny him/her the reasonable time necessary for effective preparation, taking
17 into account the exercise of due diligence.

18 d) Counsel for defendants also note that because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the
19 Fresno County Jail currently has restrictions on movement of inmates and video appearances are
20 limited by the restrictions of the wide-angle camera at the jail, which limits the number of
21 individuals who can appear on camera at a time. Moreover, because of positive COVID-19 test
22 results in the Fresno County Jail, a number of inmates, including defendants, have been placed
23 into quarantine status, making appearing for court and meeting with counsel especially difficult.

24 e) The government does not object to the continuance.

25 f) Based on the above-stated findings, the ends of justice served by continuing the
26 case as requested outweigh the interest of the public and the defendant in a trial within the
27 original date prescribed by the Speedy Trial Act.

28 g) For the purpose of computing time under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161,

et seq., within which trial must commence, the time period of November 2, 2022 to February 1, 2023, inclusive, is deemed excludable pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A), B(i) and B(ii) [Local Code T4] because the case is so unusual or so complex, due to the number of defendants, the nature of the prosecution, or the existence of novel questions of fact or law, that it is unreasonable to expect adequate preparation for pretrial proceedings or for the trial itself within the time limits established by this section. This stipulation also results from a continuance granted by the Court at defendant's request on the basis of the Court's finding that the ends of justice served by taking such action outweigh the best interest of the public and the defendant in a speedy trial.

4. Nothing in this stipulation and order shall preclude a finding that other provisions of the Speedy Trial Act dictate that additional time periods are excludable from the period within which a trial must commence.

IT IS SO STIPULATED.

Dated: October 20, 2022

PHILLIP A. TALBERT
United States Attorney

/s/ Justin J. Gilio
JUSTIN J. GILIO
Assistant United States Attorney

Dated: October 20, 2022

/s/ Brian Andritch
Brian Andritch
Counsel for Defendant
Isidro Zuriel Cruz-Vizcarra

ORDER

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: 10/24/2022

Sheila K. Oberto

THE HONORABLE SHEILA K. OBERTO
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE